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dumb-bells, are the legitimate preventive and cure of a score of diseases. Nothing should be done rashly, or without the consultation and permission of one's physician; but with this proviso the way is clear. The use of drugs and medicines has but a limited range at the most, — is an evil invoked to overcome a greater evil, one thief set to catch another. But the beauty and perfection of the gymnastic cure is that it chimes in with the continued normal state of the body, and creates health while it is itself health.

We look to see, therefore, the old art redeemed from the foul uses to which it has often been put, and employed in qualifying man to act well his part, as a body made of the earth, and as a soul destined to immortality. Strength, health, and beauty are to be quarried out of the rich materials stored away in human nature by a bountiful Creator. The greatest and the best lie near us, and humble herbs grow at our door, that can calm the fiercest diseases. There is required but the application of a normal, natural education even to our dyspeptic, deformed, and degraded race, to create new wonders of physical grace and vigor, equal to those of the Grecian time, adorned and sanctified by a coronet of Christian virtues never known to the Porch or the Academy.

ART. IV. — *Mount Lebanon. A Ten Years' Residence, from 1842 to 1852; describing the Manners, Customs, and Religion of its Inhabitants, with a Full and Correct Account of the Druse Religion; and containing Historical Records of the Mountain Tribes, from Personal Intercourse with their Chiefs and other Authentic Sources.* By COLONEL CHURCHILL, Staff Officer of the British Expedition to India. London: Saunders and Otley. 1853. 8vo. 3 vols. pp. 390, 398, 399.

THE road from Damascus to Beyrout across the ranges of the Lebanon is annually followed by travellers enough to form a caravan. It usually finishes the winding line of a Palestine

pilgrimage, and joins the most wearisome physical experiences to the most glorious impressions of natural scenery. Most travellers hurry over it, possibly diverging for a day or two to see the ruins of Baalbec or the Cedars,—call hastily upon the Consul of their nation, draw largely upon their bankers, square accounts with the dragoman and the mule men, and take the steamer next morning; forgetting, in the rapture of being “homeward bound” and finding Christian comforts, to inquire anything about the region they have traversed. There is no end to “Itineraries” of Palestine and Egypt. If the *Via Dolorosa*, with its stations, be not as well known as the Strand and Broadway, with their theatres and shops, it is the fault of readers, and not of writers. A Bostonian can find in his public libraries more about Mount Zion than about his own Beacon Hill, more about the Arabian Desert than the Back Bay flats; and the Jewish University of Tiberias has hardly fewer visitors who tell its shows and methods, than the Christian Universities of Cambridge in Old and New England.

In this endless succession of “Travels in the East,” the Lebanon is, we venture to think, unduly neglected. It is a too important region of Syria to be dismissed in a dozen concluding pages, which tell how the way-worn traveller was caught in snow-banks, was cheated at last by his servants, and felt his heart beat joyfully at getting away from the land of infidels. There are other things worth recording besides the measurements of the huge blocks of the Heliopolis temple, with wise conjectures about the miracle of their raising. The old grove of Cedars—albeit it justifies a pleasant paragraph about Solomon and Hiram, and the new “House” on Mount Moriah, with appropriate reflections—does not exhaust the forest wealth of the mountains which it crowns. Nor are we quite satisfied to have the Christian condition and Christian sects of the region confined to a brief statement of what the American missionaries have done or are trying to do. In vain we look, in nineteen twentieths of the books of travel, for any valuable information about this part of Syria. Dr. Robinson seems to have become faint with over-exertion before he reached the latitude of the mountains, and gives us his inten-

tions rather than his discoveries there,—what he learned at Beyrout, rather than what he saw on the hills. Silk Buckingham parades his adventures in the Lebanon with the usual admixture of profound disquisition, which readers skip ; while they will do well also to make large allowances for the imaginary facts of that modest writer. Burckhard is learned, accurate, and thorough,—capital in copying inscriptions, measuring ruins, recording names and places, estimating distances, and the like,—but is rather dry to a general reader. Volney's book, translated nearly seventy years ago, remains still, in spite of its inaccuracies, the most instructive and entertaining account of the Lebanon in the English tongue. The German travellers have treated more of the geography of the region than of its history, its commerce, or its religions.

The author of the work before us writes, not as a mere traveller across the Lebanon ranges, but as one long resident there. Among the illustrations which adorn his volumes is a picture of his own mansion at Howarra. The motives of his ten years' sojourn among these mountain-tribes he does not tell us, and we learn nothing more about him in the body of the work than is contained in the title-page, and in the dedication where he speaks of himself as the "faithful and obliged friend" of the Duke of Wellington. That he is a man of thorough education and refined taste, the style of his writings sufficiently proves. Disclaiming the credit of an historian, he has produced a work which has the order, the substance, and the value of a history, with the freshness of a novel. His scanty and unmanageable materials are arranged with singular skill, and each volume of the series preserves its own unity. The ulterior object of Colonel Churchill in publishing such a work is patriotic. He wishes England to be aware of the value of this Syrian territory, that, when the Turkish empire is dismembered and the Turkish power overthrown, as it must speedily be, England may avail herself of her growing popularity in the East to assume the protectorate, if not the ownership, of the Lebanon. He urges this for military as well as for commercial reasons. "Lebanon is the great natural fortress which stands midway between the Eastern and the Western world." Nor does he omit the still higher

philanthropic and religious plea; but eloquently prophesies that the English occupation of the mountains and the commercial intercourse resulting from it will "draw together and unite the hitherto divergent races of mankind in the humanizing relations of fraternity and peace."

The glowing description which Colonel Churchill gives of the natural scenery of the Lebanon is not exaggerated. It is the union of Alpine grandeur with Oriental beauty. There is all the wildness of a mountain region with all the richness which poets ascribe to the gardens of Arabia. The highest peaks are crowned with perpetual snow. Beneath the long white line, which for half the year lies dazzling under an ever-shining sun, vast ledges and bald crags belt the hills with a grayer girdle. Below these are forests of fir and oak, the hiding-place of wolves and jackals, and, according to the natives, of tigers and hyenas; but it is fair to say that the last-named animals are rarely seen, and more rarely killed. In the gorges, the black volcanic rocks contrast finely with the silver threads of innumerable brooks and cascades, and the green, in various shades, of the orchards of fig and mulberry and olive. In the higher portions of the mountain, the sides of the hills are extremely steep, and the pathways are but zigzag steps along the precipice. Lower down, the slopes are more gradual, fair pastures appear, and there are valleys of exuberant fertility, where tropical plants grow almost spontaneously, and where the increase of the earth is amazingly swift and redundant. The vegetables and fruits of the East and West are here brought close together, the orange ripens by the side of the apple, the pomegranate blooms above the potato, and the coffee-berry and the tobacco-leaf are joined in their culture, as they combine in their subsequent use to perfect the bliss of the homes of the land.

In vineyards, the sides of Lebanon rival the terraced slopes of the Pyrenees and the Rhine-land. Less labor is required in their training, and the vines grow even more luxuriantly. Sometimes they are appended as a graceful ornament to the mulberry-orchards, and grapes are gathered from the same bending branches which have already furnished the silk-worms with their food. Oftener they cover the swelling cone of

some low hill, weaving with their matted tendrils over the whole surface a fantastic embroidery. If the clusters of Lebanon do not reach in magnitude the reported dimensions of the clusters of Eshcol, which would burden two men with their weight, the fame of their juice is as wide, and its flavor is as delicious to travellers who have been dosed with the bitter acids that bear in Judæa the name of wine. The wine of Lebanon has to-day a flavor which justifies the symbolic description of its fragrance by the old prophet Hosea.* If it be not now the sign of a renewed people, it restores a traveller's nearly exhausted faith in the virtues of the generous vine.

It is difficult to determine, in the landscapes of the Lebanon, which is most prominent, the work of nature or of man. The industry of ages has to such a degree corrected the irregular forms and developed the latent capacities of these hills, that the art upon them is quite as striking as the rugged features which no culture can change. In their whole length they are densely peopled,—more densely, it is probable, than any other mountain region on the face of the earth, and, according to their proportion of arable land, more densely than any other region whatever. The proper extent of the Lebanon is not more than one hundred miles from north to south, and, if the Antilibanus be excluded, not more than thirty in its greatest breadth. Above the latitude of Tripoli, its summits fall away, rising again some hundred miles farther north, where they approach and mingle with the ranges of Mount Taurus. The district technically called “the Lebanon” lies between the summits of Mount Turbul on the north and Mount Reehan on the south, the Bekaa or Cœle-Syria on the east and the Mediterranean on the west. A little beyond its southern extremity, the Leontes empties into the sea near Tyre, and at no great distance from its northern frontier its traffic reaches the Orontes and the decayed city of Antioch. It includes a considerable portion of ancient Phœnicia, and its principal marts are those which were important in King Hiram's reign, three thousand years ago. Sidon, with a scarcely changed name, remains a port of entry and departure for the traffic of

* Hosea xiv. 7.

the mountains; and many of the same wares which once stocked the markets of the ancient Berytus are still to be seen in the bazaars of modern Beyrout. In the northern portion of the region the peaks are highest, attaining an elevation of nearly ten thousand feet above the sea. The loftiest peaks of the Antilibanus, which bound on the eastern side the valley of Cœle-Syria, are not more than six thousand feet above the sea. The same physical character belongs to this opposite mountain range which belongs to the Lebanon. A history, too, of one range is in substance a history of the other. The eastern hills have shared the political fortunes of the western.

The exact number of inhabitants of the Lebanon it is very difficult to reckon, or even to estimate. The villages are so numerous, the method of living so patriarchal, and the jealousy of Frank intrusion so quick and sensitive, that, even if a foreigner could find his way through the intricate passages of the mountains, he would gain but little correct information from the natives. The Turkish authorities at Sidon, Beyrout, and Tripoli are unable to tell the population of the region which pays them tribute. Their dealings are with the Sheiks and Emirs, not directly with the inhabitants. Estimating the average number of each of the twenty-one districts at about twenty thousand, the whole population of the Lebanon may be reckoned at somewhat more than four hundred thousand. Of these the Maronites are most numerous, making about one half of the whole. The Druses, nearly equal in political and military importance, are far inferior in numbers. In the Lebanon proper, their communities do not exceed thirty thousand souls, and in all Syria they are not more than sixty thousand. There are in the low lands on the borders of the Bekaa and the sea some thirty thousand Moslems, and the remainder of the people are chiefly Greek Catholics, with a few of the Orthodox Greek Church. The Maronites are found throughout the whole length of the range, but have exclusive possession of the northern districts, especially the region back of Tripoli and Djebail. The Druses are the hereditary owners of the southern districts. Their principal towns are on the hills between the latitudes of Sidon and Beyrout. The Greek Christians, who are, however, mostly

Syrians in language and descent, are found in the larger trading cities, especially those on the roads from Damascus to the Mediterranean.

We shall not attempt to follow Colonel Churchill in his comprehensive account of these twenty-one districts, to pronounce the names of which correctly is no small trial to English vocal organs. Most of them are interesting, if not for their commercial or religious importance, at least for some historical association, remarkable adventure, or distinguished person connected with them. In the Jibby Bisherry, the loftiest, wildest, and most secluded of all the districts, the Maronites have their cities of refuge and their most sacred shrine. This is the convent of Kanobin, situated deep down in the gorge of one of the mountain torrents, in a hollow so dark that only the midday sun is able to reach it. Like the convents of the Nile and of St. Saba in Judæa, it is hewn partly from the solid rock. Dating back to the time of Theodosius, it owes its first important endowment to the Sultan Saladin, who here received food and shelter from the hospitable brethren. For several hundred years, it was the summer retreat of the Maronite patriarchs, who could remember how these strong chambers had received and protected one of their own sacred line, flying for his life. Legends of cruelty belong to the convent of Kanobin, which are fit to be classed with the stories of Inquisition tortures. The fate of Assaad Shidiak, who ventured to read for himself the Bible, to preach openly its doctrines, and even to argue from its pages against the orthodox views of the Maronite Church, is a warning to all heretics not to trust the kind words, or heed the invitation, of the brethren of this convent.

The district of Djebail was renowned in ancient times for its temple of Venus, where human sacrifices reddened the waters. It is known now all over the East for its fragrant tobacco, prized above all other varieties of the delicious weed. In the Arab degrees of comparison the Nile leaf is good, "Latakia" is better, but "Jebelee" is superlatively best, — to be smoked only in a bowl of generous size, and through an amber mouthpiece. In this district, too, there is a fine illustration of the democratic spirit of the age, which is lifting

trade and the *bourgeoisie* into ascendancy over the privileges of birth. The government of the Lebanon is mostly a feudal aristocracy, guarded with extreme jealousy, and supported by the universal sentiment of loyalty. But here, where the wealth of the people comes from its foreign traffic, a merchant, who twenty-five years ago was a common peasant, has risen to be equal in influence to any lord of the land. No Sheik owns so large an estate, or has so many tenants, as Michael Toobea.

In the romantic district of El Metten is the castle of Kurneille, the scene of the bloody tragedy in the family of the Prussian Consul-General, which some of our readers doubtless remember. On a neighboring hill are the game preserves of the feudal lord, where the sport of partridge-shooting is enjoyed in a style scientific in its exactness and Oriental in its laziness. To *chase* bird or beast in hunting is beneath the dignity of an Arab Emir, nor is he content to bring down an insignificant brace at a single shot. The style which he prefers involves no fatigue or exertion, and he may sit on his divan, and puff at his pipe, while the birds are gathering at their feeding-place to receive his murderous discharge. The sport has a strong resemblance to the Yankee way of catching pigeons. All that is necessary is a long board covered with barley, a hut of stones or bushes, with a loophole to watch the game, a gun loaded to the muzzle, an early start in the morning, and a faculty of lying still. One discharge is a full reward. The servants pick up the birds, and the Emir goes back to his coffee.

In the Metten are mines of coal and iron of considerable value, and here are given wages for labor approaching to the European standard, and amazing to the Arabs, who look upon a piastre (five cents) as a fair average pay for a day's work. In the town of Shweir in this district is an intermittent spring, where is well illustrated, not only a frequent peculiarity of the springs in Syria, but the fanatical superstition of the people. The water dries up at the beginning of summer, and flows again about the 1st of September, sometimes even before the rains have commenced. This singular property is wholly unaccountable in the eyes of the

people. The spring has, therefore, been placed under a tutelary saint, who is supposed annually to trouble the waters.

“On the day of their expected reappearance, the whole village is in commotion; the bells ring, the priests assemble in their different churches, from whence, leading forth a numerous and solemn procession, with uplifted crucifix and floating banner, they go down to the cave, which is by the side of the road, and await the accomplishment of the miracle.

“Should there be any delay, the saint is loudly invoked; hundreds of lighted tapers flaunt about in all directions; clouds of incense ascend; votive offerings are dedicated; supplications are poured out. Presently the water begins to ooze, — it bubbles, — it flows. Frantic shouts of rejoicing fill the air; bottles are speedily filled with the sacred element, to be corked up and carefully preserved. At length the crowd, pleased and gratified, disperses; the priests assured of the efficacy of their prayers, the people congratulating themselves on the strength of their faith. The enthusiasm of ignorance and superstition has had its burst.” — Vol. I. pp. 114, 115.

We may here say a few words upon the faith and character of this Maronite people, who claim to be rightful masters of the whole of the Lebanon, and who rule almost absolutely in the northern half of its range, paying only a reluctant and indirect tribute to the Turkish Pacha, and tolerating no Moslem in their villages. They boast that they are as orthodox in their origin as they are in their present devotion to the Papal See; that “Mar Maroun of Mount Koros,” a recognized saint of the fifth century, was their founder, and that they keep the faith which he delivered. History, however, does not verify their boast, but will have it that a heretic Maroun of Epiphania gathered a sect together to whom he left his name and his Monothelite notions, and that these notions were for four centuries preserved, diffused, and honored. Persecution did not reconcile them to the Catholic belief; but when they were pressed by their Moslem adversaries, they were glad, by concessions to the faith of the invading Christian hosts, to secure the protection of these powerful allies. The Crusaders received from them “tender sentiments of fraternity,” as well as valuable assistance in finding the way to Palestine, and the Latin Patriarch of Antioch in the year 1167

heard their formal recantation of the heresy of their patron saint. They did not cease to reverence this holy man, but managed conveniently to forget the exceptionable portions of his creed. Mar Maroun has still his regular feast-days in their chapels.

At present they are most bigoted adherents of the Papacy, allowing not merely the claim of his Holiness, as head of their Church, to dictate their creed, but submitting also to his paternal government in matters of discipline. They prize beyond measure any mark of favor or remembrance from the seven-hilled city. At the local councils, a Papal Legate usually "assists." In point of fact, however, the Roman Church interferes very little with the religious customs and practices of the Maronites, and is content to receive their submission and return its occasional blessing.

In the reckoning of their bishops, the Maronites keep to the consecrated Scripture number. Twelve are appointed and hold the honor, while only eight have special charges and fixed places of residence. The twelve are a college to choose the Patriarch; who, though nominally a spiritual viceroy of the Pope, is in reality almost the absolute sovereign of the people. His election in the conclave of bishops, the seclusion, the long debates, the ceremonies when the vote is declared, the wide rejoicings, the congratulations from the several dioceses and the various feudal houses, the bonfires and illuminations, are the counterpart to the election of St. Peter's successor at Rome. The Patriarch's office is not a sinecure, though he is not burdened with any great weight of political cares. He has numberless disputes to settle, and visitors to receive. He has to outwit the Turkish Pachas, to overreach the intriguing Patriarchs of the other Catholic sects, of which there are no less than four in the Lebanon, to restrain by skilful management the hatred of his tribes to the Druses, their hereditary foes, and to farm judiciously his own revenues, which are neither few nor small.

The income of the Patriarch, beside the "sixth" which he receives from the bishops, is about the same as the salary of the President of the United States. It arises chiefly from the rents of landed property. The bishops receive their tithes of

the income of the real estate, with very numerous fees for special services. The inferior clergy are paid by voluntary contributions, are almost always poor, but are never in want. The reverence paid to the clergy is extreme, and so long as the peasant has a "medjidi" in his purse, or a loaf in his wallet, the priest shall not want for money or food. The affection of the people for their spiritual guides is fostered by careful training, and manifested in every possible way. As soon as the mass is finished, the whole congregation, old and young, rush forward to kiss the priest's hand or his garments; when he walks in the streets, the children follow him at a respectful distance; all the secrets of the people are intrusted to his charge; his word is law, and his frown is terror; next to the earthquake, his threatened hell is the most dreaded; and the lots in heaven, which he sells "by the yard," find ready purchasers. Colonel Churchill gives a curious extract from the Maronite Catechism.

"*Question.* If you were to see an angel and a priest walking together, which should you adore the most? — *Answer.* The priest.

"*Q.* And how would you show your adoration for the priest? — *A.* By falling down and kissing the ground on which he is walking.

"*Q.* Why is the priest to be adored more than the angel? — *A.* Because he is so vastly superior to the angel.

"*Q.* Why so? — *A.* Because the angel is a minister and servant of God, whereas the priest can *command God* to descend from heaven, as in the mass." — Vol. III. pp. 83, 84.

Like the other Oriental sects, the Maronites allow priests, after taking holy orders, to retain their wives. The higher clergy, however, must be celibates; and for this reason, the bishops are chosen exclusively from the monastic orders. In no part of the world is monachism more popular, more flourishing, or more powerful than in the Lebanon, and in no sect of the Lebanon is its relative influence so great as among the Maronites. They have at least fifty convents, most of which keep full their complement of brethren. These convents occupy the most beautiful sites, commanding wide and picturesque views of the mountains and the sea. Their seclusion is in their inaccessible position. The way to their lofty walls is not easy to find, and except in the case of the more ancient,

which are frequented as shrines, the monks are not vexed by a crowd of visitors. They send messengers down from time to time to the villages to procure supplies and to dispense blessings. These brethren make their angel visits from house to house, exhibit the sacred pictures for the kisses of the faithful, receive the votive offerings which testify love for the saints, and carry back the prayers and the money of their grateful hosts. They have excellent taste in the selection of presents; and it is a common saying at Beyrout, that if you want to get nice fare and find the best of everything, you must go to the convents. What the gardens of the convent fail to produce is supplied from the town bazaars. And when a Sheik dies, the religious house adjoining his estate is very likely to become his heir, — especially if he have a large score of sins to pay off.

There are three orders of Maronite monks, the Lebanines, the Aleppines, and the Antonines. Of these, the Antonines are the strictest, and the most honored by the people. They retain more than the others the ancient rules of discipline, and keep the localities which have been sanctified by tradition. At Koshaya, where three hundred monks reside, St. Anthony himself spiritually dwells, and works miracles for the healing of maniacs and the confirmation of the doubting. The treatment of the insane is quite scientific, and resembles in many respects that of our improved asylums; but the monks disclaim all credit for the cures which it works, and refer the happy change to the direct agency of their heavenly patron. The Antonines are to the Lebanines proper what the Franciscans of Italy are to the Dominicans. There is no order in the Lebanon which corresponds to the Benedictines. The scanty scholarship of the monks is confined to a bare comprehension of the offices of the mass and the sacraments, with the addition of a few ecclesiastical legends. With the exploits of St. George all are of course familiar. He shares with the Virgin their distinguished consideration, and they take pride in the reflection that his most brilliant victory was gained on their territory. A couple of miles north of Beyrout, they point out the spot where he slew the dragon. Rev. Alban Butler, in his life of the saint, treats the legend as emble-

matic and typical, — a suggestion which the Maronite monks wrathfully reject. Colonel Churchill naïvely remarks, that “the tradition is evidently spurious,” and that the people themselves do not really believe it.

In fanatical devotion to “the Mother of God,” the Maronite monks and people reach even the standard of his Holiness, Pope Pius, or the editor of *Brownson’s Quarterly*. The pictures of Mary which adorn their chapels are tawdry and disgusting, and not at all improved by the stains of innumerable kisses. They resemble, in their style of art, the altar-pieces which St. Luke, the Evangelist painter, has left so fortunately to the Roman Church, and they reward a curious eye about as well as that Bologna Madonna, which one must climb three miles of stairs and inclined planes to see.

The Maronites have a military renown which vies with that of the Hospitallers or Templars. They value this hardly less than the praise of orthodoxy. The pretext of their early and constant military training is the defence of their faith, and they have rarely fought in any other than the cause of their religion, which they identify with that of their country. Their hereditary enemies are the Druses, who long disputed with them the sovereignty of the mountain range, and still keep possession of its southern portion. The Moslems have over them a rule which is hardly felt, and is recognized only by the indirect tax which goes through the Sheiks to the Pachas, and thence to Constantinople. In their own region they are not annoyed by the sight of Mahometan symbols. Instead of the minaret and the muezzin is the bell in its little turret, which greets the sunrise with its daily music, as its call is caught up from village to village, and echoes from hill to hill. The green robe, which no Christian in Egypt or Palestine may wear without danger, is fearlessly worn in the Lebanon. The Porte dares to send no recruiting sergeant into the land of these mountaineers. The foreign power which they most respect is France; but the influence even of this gracious protector has of late years fallen off. The hope, which has for some centuries been handed down, of deliverance from the tribute now paid to the Moslems, is becoming weakened by its long delay. Colonel Churchill gives two curious docu-

ments, entitled "Letters of Protection," granted by their Majesties Louis XIV. and Louis XV. to their dear children, the Maronites of Mount Lebanon.

We regret that our space will not allow us in this article to speak at length of that remarkable people whose name, with both Christians and Moslems in Syria, is the symbol of utter godlessness. Very little has heretofore been known about the Druses, except that they were a rude, warlike, and troublesome clan of infidels and robbers. Their mysteries have been concealed with a vigilance which has defied all scrutiny. Their numbers have been exaggerated by fear; and even now travellers who pass through their country find it hard to get any correct information as to their belief, their strength, or their policy. To this singular race, Colonel Churchill has devoted a large and a most interesting portion of his work. His account of their religion is mainly translated and condensed from the elaborate dissertation of De Sacy, which was compiled from manuscripts brought by the fortunes of war to the libraries of Oxford, Rome, and Paris. Some of these manuscripts are also in possession of the American missionaries in Syria, and furnish them with the means of understanding the faith of a people among whom they have taught schools for many years without learning one syllable of their hereditary creed, from either children or parents. The secrecy which the founder of the religion enjoined has been faithfully kept for more than seven hundred years. The same ethical code which insists upon *truth* as the first and great commandment, and forbids any concealment or prevarication among Druse brethren, makes it the duty of every believer to hide and deny his faith before heretics and unbelievers.

A long residence among the Druses, and a familiarity with their customs, their industry, their Sheiks, and their people, have enabled Colonel Churchill to correct entirely the popular judgment concerning them. They are evidently much more to his liking than their rivals, the Maronites, and far superior in the nobler elements of character. Their ardent patriotism, their unity of sentiment, their fraternal spirit, their simplicity of life, their reverence for the aged, their exemption from

superstition and priestcraft, their treatment of the female sex, so much in advance of the tribes around them, the splendid abilities and chivalrous valor of their aristocracy, all combine to refute the slanders which their enemies are never weary of repeating. The scheme of their secret religion is more rational than the creed of any Moslem or Christian sect in Syria; and the lives of their "Ockals," who are the "initiated,"—not the *priests*, but the *wise men* of the body,—are much more consistent and saintly than the lives of dervishes or monks in the Lebanon region. The disgusting explanation given by Buckingham* of the symbol of the horn, which in the mountain villages the Druse women continue to wear, is more true to the tastes of the writer than to decency or fact. If the custom loses influence year by year, it is owing to the example of Frank fashions, which prove that a woman can be beautiful and respectable without copying in her person the front of the unicorn. The custom is local rather than religious, and once belonged to all the Lebanon tribes.

The Druses number in all Syria less than one third as many as the Maronites of the Lebanon, yet they can bring into the field a larger army of fighting men, better disciplined, and more inured to the fatigue and privation of mountain warfare. Their Sheiks and Emirs have always been the ruling spirits of the mountain. The houses of Maan, Jumblatt, and Shehaab have furnished a line of princes who would be remarkable in more civilized lands. Colonel Churchill relieves the monotonous detail of feudal jealousy and strife, family intrigues, wars with the Pachas at Sidon and Damascus and with the Turkish and Egyptian generals, by numerous personal sketches of the more celebrated of these native rulers. His account of the rise of the house of Maan,—of the Emir Fakaradeen, his genius, his attainments, and his shifting fortunes,—is exceedingly graphic. This Emir, in despair of resisting the rapacity of his Turkish masters, which in the beginning of the seventeenth century was at its highest point of insolence and extortion, took the desperate resolution of quitting his native land. The story of his departure, his voy-

* Travels among the Arabs, p. 394, London edition.

age, his landing at Leghorn, and his reception and honor at the luxurious Tuscan court; his scruples about the heathen food of his entertainers; his sharpness in baffling curious inquiries about his own private affairs and about the numbers of his people; his dignified answers to the kings of France and Spain, the latter of whom promised him a better government than he had left if he would only become a Christian; his filial obedience to his mother's summons, bidding him come back again to Syria; his laconic answers to the Grand Duke, who sought to hinder his departure, and, finally, his dramatic start, with a barrel of gunpowder, which he caused to be put in the vessel, and threatened to explode if any one attempted to prevent his sailing; his enthusiastic reception by his friends and subjects after five years' absence;—this singular story makes one of those pleasant episodes which abound in the work before us.

In the account of the Emir Fakaradeen (some portions of which we are able to verify from our own recollection) is a fine passage, which may be quoted as a fair example of Colonel Churchill's descriptive powers.

“The space of ground occupied by the tent of an Arab Emir is nearly a hundred yards in length. From the centre rises conspicuously the awning, which covers in the rooms more immediately set apart for himself and his family, surmounted by a glittering gilt ball, out of which rises a spear's head with pendent horse-tails. The guest-room, which is at the farthest extremity of the tent, is laid down with Persian carpets of the richest manufacture; along three of its sides runs a divan, the seating and cushions of which are made of the softest wool, curiously wrought into a variety of patterns, and expressly made of a thickness and durability calculated to stand the wear and tear of continual removals. The rest of the tent is partitioned off into divisions for the reception of the various stores of corn, rice, barley, oil, butter, etc., in which consist the Emir's wealth and consideration.

“Around him, as far as his eye can reach, rove his flocks of sheep and camels, accompanied by groups of thorough-bred mares and horses, the latter occasionally bestridden by perfect infants, gambolling on the bare backs of those mild and tractable animals, which seem, as it were, to return the caresses of their innocent playmates, and to acknowledge a mutual charge, by the gentleness of their paces and the docility of their movements; but which, when a stronger hand reins them in, and

urges their course, suddenly display the fiery and indomitable energies of their nature, 'pawing in the valley and rejoicing in their strength.' Then does this gentle Arab steed become beautiful in his greatness, and 'the glory of his nostrils is terrible.'

"As the shades of evening close in, the wanderers, in gradually lessening circles, approach the patriarchal tent, and every nightfall brings along with it those various incidents of pastoral life, that make even its very monotony a continual round of fresh-recurring and pleasurable emotions, which the Arab would not barter for the pomp and glitter and riches of an empire. The early dawn again renews the grateful scene. Amidst the bleating of his flocks, the neighing of his steeds, the lowing of his herds, and the tinkling of his camel bells, the Arab Emir wakes from his slumbers, and, spreading his carpet, sits in the door of his tent, surrounded by his children, his slaves, and the principal members of his tribe. The dew-covered plains sparkle before him like a spangled robe; the morning breezes impart a cooling and delicious fragrance to all around; a still and melodious harmony seems to reign over the boundless tracts which melt away into the distant horizon; and, child of Nature by his wants, sympathies, and tastes, he knows no joys but what she affords, and appreciates no gifts but what she imparts.

"Every hour taken from such exhilarating moments as these, except, perhaps, the more stirring periods of a distant foray, when he leads out his tribe in search of a disputed pasture, or in retaliation for wrongs incurred, is one of unmitigated disgust." — Vol. II. pp. 376–379.

It is fair to observe, that this sketch is considerably overwrought, as describing either the tastes of a Druse Emir or the retinue of a Bedouin Sheik. A spectacle of this kind is witnessed only on those rare occasions when the mountain lords choose to pay a short visit to the plains around Damascus, or to make a spring encampment in the Bekaa. The Druse Emir prefers his palace in the hills, with its gardens, its groves, its fountains, its magnificent prospects, its stately ceremony, and the stirring life of the Meedan, to the monotonous pastoral routine of the plain. All the great families of the Southern Lebanon have been seized, at some time or other, with the mania for palace-building. In this respect, Deir el Kammar, the chief city of the Druses, is quite as remarkable, in proportion to its size, as Damascus or Genoa. The comical threat of the Emir Fakaradeen, which Mr. Churchill

translates into an English jingle no less ludicrous, was literally fulfilled, and the stones of the castle of Akkar are still shown in the archways of the Governor's house at the Deir. The anecdote is pleasantly told.

"A marriage had just been concluded between a daughter of Fakaradeen and a son of the Emir Yousuf of Akkar. This Emir, having never seen the great man of whom he had heard so much, took it into his head to pay him an unannounced visit. When he arrived, the son was out hunting, and he entered the Emir's divan just as he was taking his midday slumber. Turning to his daughter-in-law, who was present, he remarked, 'Is that your father? Why, I could tie him to a bunch of keys and put him in my pocket,'—alluding to his diminutive stature. The Emir Fakaradeen overheard the sarcasm, and immediately arose. Without waiting to exchange the usual formalities and courtesies with the Emir Yousuf, he ordered his horses to be saddled and his men to get ready for departure. Entreaties, expostulations, and excuses were alike unheeded. This apparently trifling observation rankled in the Emir's breast with all the bitterness of premeditated insult and contempt, and as he turned his mare's head to the south he flung a scroll amongst the crowd containing the following distich in Arabic verse:—

'I am small, but my foes see me great, and stand in awe;
Ye are like the poplar-wood; I am the wood's saw.
By Teeba and Zumza, and the Prophet, I swear
The stones of Akkar shall build my palace at the Deir.'"

Vol. II. pp. 369, 370.

The most elaborate sketch in Colonel Churchill's volumes is that of the Emir Bechir Shehaab, who in all the early part of the present century ruled the native tribes of the Lebanon with a dictatorial sway. This extraordinary chief manifested in excess at once the virtues and the faults of his race. He was as strict in his justice as he was severe in his discipline; as courteous as he was cunning; as gentle to captives as he was implacable to foes. His tyranny was balanced by his generous condescension. Simple in his own private tastes and habits, he kept always at his court the state of a monarch, awing by his dignity, and dazzling by his magnificence. No friend of the people could be more conciliating in his address; yet the greatest Sheiks trembled when they stood before him, and his guests at dinner were so paralyzed by his terrible presence, that they lost the power of swallowing, and

were unable to remain. Acts of the basest cruelty stain his rise to power, while acts of the noblest charity adorn his administration of it. His treacheries are fit to be classed with those of the famous Djessar, the "Butcher" of Acre, whose patronage laid the foundation of his fortunes. His wise foresight anticipated the wants of his people, while his enterprise developed to an unprecedented degree the resources of the land. He was for years emphatically first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen. In the consolidation of his own splendid tyranny, he freed the people from the more galling oppression of their feudal masters. A secret conversion to Christianity, known to the Maronite priests, but not believed by the Druses, made him popular with the tribes of the North. His own brethren sustained him who had carried so high the honor of their house; and the Moslems honored one who, from the beginning, was careful that the rules and the prayers, the feasts and the fasts, of the Prophet's religion should be observed in his own palace, and in the villages under his command. By his spies he was made acquainted with all the secret conspiracies which were formed against him, and his firmness in dealing with plotters even of his own family made men see that he was no respecter of persons. His vicissitudes of fortune in early life gave him a large knowledge of human nature, so that he knew when to dissemble, when to bribe, when to flatter, and when to threaten. With consummate art he made of his masters, first patrons, then allies, and then vassals. And he has left a name in the Lebanon which suggests at once commanding genius, terrible energy, comprehensive wisdom, and perfect equity,—a name which all the people are proud to remember and prompt to honor.

Though there are schools in all parts of the Lebanon, even in the hamlets, the standard of education, both among Druses and Maronites, is low and narrow. The priests have little more than the meagre knowledge necessary in their profession; the convents are not seminaries of learning, and the wisdom of the Ockals is the fruit of meditation more than of study. A few of the Sheiks covet the fame of scholars, and add one or two of the languages of Europe to their stock

of luxuries. A moderate knowledge of Arabic literature and legends belongs to a gentleman's accomplishments, and the tales of the Caliphs find their place in the still life of the mountains, as of Cairo and Damascus. Magic is not despised in a land where it was once almost a science. Some of the Sheiks are skilful "mediums," and assist in performances closely resembling the "rapping" phenomena of our own region. The Sheik Bechir Talhook, of the "Upper Ghurb," is a master in this department. With no help but the Koran and the Psalms of David, he sets jugs to spinning, animates sticks, causes boiling eggs to leap from the water, and endows New Testaments with the faculty of spontaneous gyration. In the diagnosis of diseases he is particularly gifted; and he has a number of familiars in the spirit-world, who are always on hand to help him cast out demons. The traditional faith of the people aids his pretensions. Every one believes in the existence and the influence of supernatural beings. There are haunted houses and haunted neighborhoods which the bravest fear to visit, and no priest is furnished for his work until he has learned how to exorcise bad spirits. Some suppose that the Psalms furnish a key to the science of necromancy, and endeavor by study of their obscure passages to find the secret of spiritual intercourse.

Colonel Churchill gives a more flattering account of the success and influence of the American missionaries than we had gathered from their own statements in public and private. Their work thus far has been rather in exciting the people to more interest in education than in making converts from any of the religions. The Syrian mission has now been in existence some thirty-two years. It has six stations, four of which are in the Lebanon, one at Aleppo, and one at Mosul. There is also a station at Damascus, at which English and American missionaries labor together. The central station is at Beyrout, where the society own a large building just outside the walls, in which are a chapel, a library, and a printing-office with a steam press. A considerable number of elementary and religious works in the Arabic language have been issued from this press, and the publication of the Arabic Bible, under the supervision of the translator, Dr. Eli Smith, who

has resided in the country more than a quarter of a century, is nearly or quite completed. At Abeigh, a Druse town about twenty miles from Beyrout, there is a Protestant College for young men, directed by two of the missionaries, which has already done much to stimulate inquiry and sow the seeds of future religious change. Converts are made very slowly, and the communicants in the native Protestant churches are very few. The size of congregations, especially in the Druse mountains, is no indication of the actual success of the preachers in their work. The Druses are more ready to listen than the sects which are governed by priestcraft, but are not more open to conviction. The most formidable opposition to evangelical truth, if the anniversary discourse of Rev. Dr. Thompson of Sidon, which we happened to hear, may be received in evidence, comes from the intrigues and falsehoods of the Romish priesthood; and he contended that the great work of the mission was to fight with this enemy of God.

The missionaries place their chief reliance on the gradual distribution of the Bible and the indirect influence of their schools, while they in no wise neglect the gift of preaching. Most of them hold Sunday services in the Arabic language, and in the summer season make short excursions to villages, where congregations can be gathered. They are generally treated with respect, and are judicious enough to refrain from needless conflict with the prejudices of the tribes. The Turkish government is disposed to favor rather than hinder them, though of course they are not allowed to operate in any way upon the faith of Moslems. Occasionally, however, they meet with an uncomfortable reception. The neighborhood of the famous "Cedars" is less friendly to "Bible men" than the districts around Sidon, and it is desirable for visitors in that region to keep their Protestantism to themselves. We close our imperfect notice of Colonel Churchill's volumes, by extracting his account of one of these missionary adventures.

"Among the remarkable spots of the Jibby Bisherry is the village of Ehden, situated at about three hours northwest of the Cedars. With its waving chestnut-trees, and its pure and abundant springs, it affords a most attractive retreat from the heats of summer. Two years

ago, the American missionaries residing at Tripoli proposed to themselves to pass a few months there. A house sufficiently commodious having been procured, they proceeded with their families to take possession of their new residence. They arrived, and alighted in safety. The mules in due time followed and unloaded. The shades of evening were fast closing in, when all of a sudden the tocsin was sounded, the village bells pealed incessantly, the peasants gathered tumultuously together, arming, sounding the war-cry, rushing to and fro like the inhabitants of a town besieged. The priests were seen hurrying here and there with crucifix in hand, as if leading on to an imaginary assault. The Americans wondered what on earth had happened, and essayed to go out and make inquiries. In a twinkling of an eye they found themselves thrust back into their house, the door blockaded, the roof scaled, the windows smashed in, while the most awful imprecations filled the air. Fruitlessly they endeavored to parley, to remonstrate,—all in vain. ‘No Bible men here,’ was the universal cry. ‘Not an hour in the village; away with you; this is no place for heretics!’—‘But let us pass the night, and early on the morning we will be off,’ was the very moderate and humble demand of the affrighted missionaries.

“An appeal to the rocks would have been as reasonable. The priests would hear of no terms, no delay. The Americans had placed before them the simple alternative of leaving the place on the instant, or having the house burnt about their ears. The firebrands were already lighted, the incendiaries were standing by, only waiting for the signal. Under such circumstances, to hesitate would have been madness. In the dead of the night, amidst the wildest confusion, surrounded by a furious mob, by the lurid gleam of torches, the missionaries and their families took their departure from Ehden and descended again into the plains. Such an outrage could not of course be allowed to pass by unpunished;—representations were made to the Turkish government, by the American ambassador, upon the subject, and a firman was promptly procured, giving the required satisfaction. It was difficult, however, to persuade the mountaineers that they were under the Sultan’s jurisdiction, in such matters as these. ‘The Patriarch is our Sultan,’ was the haughty reply to the summons of their local authorities, demanding compensation for the losses incurred by the missionaries in their midnight flight. And, indeed, in this expression may be seen the essence of the Maronite religion.”—Vol. I. pp. 56–59.